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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /080 W
---------- 052877
R 311217Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5362

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3882

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SF
SUBJECT: NP PARTY CAUCUS ON SEPTEMBER 10: MAJOR POLICY DEVELOPMENTS ANTICIPATED

1. PM VORSTER HAS CALLED SPECIAL NATIONALIST PARTY CAUCUS ON SEPTEMBER 10 IN PRETORIA AT WHICH MP'S, SENATORS AND PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEMBERS, NUMBERING 296 IN ALL, WILL ASSEMBLE. OFFICIAL REASON FOR CAUCUS IS "INFORMATION" MEETING. ECONOMIC MINISTER HEUNIS TOLD EMBASSY THAT HE HAD PROPOSED MEETING LONG BEFORE JUNE 16 SOWETO OUTBREAK AND ORIGINAL PURPOSE WAS TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR SA. PROBLEMS OF SWA AND RHODESIA, TOGETHER WITH BLACK UNREST AT HOME, HAD OVERTAKEN ORIGINAL IDEA AND NOW WOULD ALSO BE ADDRESSED.

2. OPPOSITION REACTION HAS BEEN AN ANGRY CALL BY PRP LEADER COLIN EGLIN FOR INCLUSION OF ALL MP'S "IF MATTERS ARE IMPORTANT ENOUGH FOR SUCH AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING". EGLIN SUBSEQUENTLY HAS ASKED FOR SPECIAL SESSION OF PARLIAMENT IN SECOND HALF OF 1976.
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EM PRESS IS SPECULATING THAT VORSTER WILL USE THE NP CAUCUS
(A) TO CONSULT PARTY LEADERSHIP TO "LAUNCHING OUT IN ANY
DIRECTION WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS DEVIATING FROM GRASS-
ROOTS POLICY NORMS" AND/OR (B) TO ANNOUNCE MAJOR INITIATIVE
ON INTERNAL DISORDERS, SWA, RHODESIA, OR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

4. COMMENT: LIKELY PURPOSE OF NP CAUCUS IS TO INFORM AND
CONSULT PARTY FAITHFUL ON FAST MOVING EVENTS ON DOMESTIC
AND INTERNATIONAL FRONTS.
VORSTER HAS BEEN UNUSUALLY UN-
COMMUNICATIVE ABOUT PRESSING
PUBLIC ISSUES SINCE THE FIRST
KISSINGER-VORSTER MEETING AND THIS HAS CAUSED CONSIDERABLE
PUZZLEMENT AMONG THE NL RANK AND FILE AND THE COUNTRY AT LARGE.
ON AUGUST 27 VORSTER DID BREAK SILENCE WITH SHORT ADDRESS AT
SPRINGS PARTY RALLY IN WHICH HE SAID NO CRISIS EXISTS IN

SOUTH AFRICA. THIS HAS FURTHERED FEELING OF UNEASE AT SAG'S
PLACID EXTERIOR IN FACE OF MANIFEST DIFFICULTIES. THE NP
CAUCUS IS SANDWICHED BETWEEN NP ORANGE FREE STATE CONGRESS ON
SEPT 6-8 AND TRANSVAAL CONGRESS ON SEPT 13-16. THIS SERIES
OF MEETINGS AFFORD GOOD PLATFORM FOR VORSTER TO MAKE PUBLIC
ANNOUNCEMENTS IF HE IS SO INCLINED.
BOWDLER

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